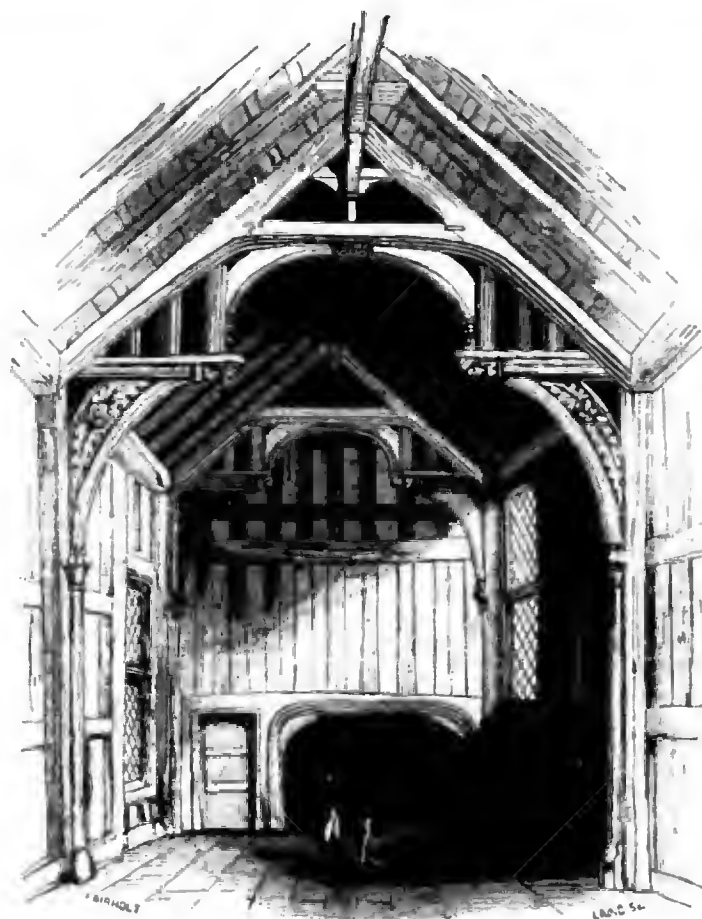


ANCIENT HALL, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX.



chancel. The present tower on the west is of more modern date; it is a heavy piece of building, of flint and rubble-stone, laid chequer-wise, with angular buttresses. The porch conceals a door slightly ornamented, and coeval with the chancel. The row of windows above the chancel arches are the most striking external features in the church; they have each a double recessed arch, supported by pillars on each side, and are connected by a string course, decorated by fillet-mouldings, or entirely plain. Above is a corbel table, with grotesque heads, &c.

ANCIENT HALL, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX.

THE curious relic depicted in our engraving was so completely hidden by the sub-division of walls and ceilings within it, to adapt it to the necessities of a dwelling-house, that, until the demolition of the buildings in the spring of the present year, all that could be seen were the carved heads of the ends of the hammer-beams. These heads were beautifully and spiritedly carved, and, indeed, the ornamentation of the entire hall was well and boldly cut. It was of small dimensions, the side pillars seen in our cut being in the centre of the hall, and was cleared of modern floorings, &c. before it was demolished, in order that its construction might be perfectly visible. The buildings with which it was connected were old, but no record of the history or occupation of this place is known, except that about two centuries ago it was an inn, the sign being *The Iron Crown*. The Hall appears to be of the time of

Henry VII., judging from its detail; it may have been the hall of some wealthy tradesman (Sir John Crosby, in London, and John Halle, in Salisbury, have each left specimens of their in-door splendour), for Walden had many rich traders in the olden time; or it may have been the spoil of some monastic edifice in the neighbourhood which had fallen in the days of Henry VIII.

The name of Walden is said to be derived from the Saxon words *wald* and *den*, signifying a woody hill. At a later period the place was called Waldenburgh, and in the reign of Stephen, when Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex (who built the castle, of which a fragment still remains, and who was the grandson of one of the most distinguished followers of William the Conqueror), procured from the Empress Matilda, the grant of a market previously held at Newport, the town took the appellation of Cheping-walden. The present designation owes its origin to the culture of saffron in the neighbourhood, which is supposed to have been introduced by Sir Thomas Smith early in the sixteenth century, but has long since been discontinued; the device of the seal of the corporation is a rebus on the name, being *three saffron flowers called in*, about as bad a heraldic pun as any on record.

The ancient hall and the buildings with which it was connected have been pulled down, in order to construct a new market-place. The carved heads from the hammer-beams (six in all) have been preserved by the Hon. R. C. Neville, in his museum, at Audley End.

THE NEW BUILDINGS ACT.
THE MASTER CARPENTERS' SOCIETY.

THE anniversary dinner of the Master Carpenters' Society was held on Wednesday in last week, at Blackwall; Mr. H. Biers, president, in the chair. Mr. Stephens, in proposing the health of the chairman, took occasion to say, as it was probably the last time that their chairman would occupy the president's chair at their anniversary, how much was owing to him for exertions during seven years in opposing or promoting, as they might be deemed injurious or useful, the many measures brought before Parliament in the shape of buildings' bills, and which question was even now left in a most unsatisfactory and discreditable state. He said they all knew that a committee was selected by Lord Morpeth in October last, but up to this period (the end of June) they were, as regarded the Metropolitan Buildings Bill, precisely in the same state that they were in this time last year. As their chairman was upon that committee, and as he had appeared there the representative of this society, he (Mr. Stevens) thought they might look to him on the present occasion for some statement on the subject.

The president, in acknowledgment, stated, that as this was the last time he should have the honour to fill the president's chair at their anniversary, he would very shortly reply to some of the observations which have been made, especially upon the very important subject of the Buildings Bill: he wished he could foretell a future and improved edition of it. In October last he was sent by the society as its